The Wayback Machine - https://web.archive.org/web/20020727152922/http://communitypresbyterian.com:80/sermons/72901.htm

# The Thoughts of our Hearts

**2 Corinthians 10:1-5**

Rev. Ernie Tufft
CPC July 29, 2001

BACK TO MAIN SERMON PAGE

**The title of my sermon this morning is taken from an ancient prayer of the Church found in the 11th century Sarum Missal, in which the Church has ever since prayed to the Lord for the past thousand years, *"cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love You, and worthily magnify Your holy name.***

**Seven centuries before the Sarum Missal, Augustine of Hippo, that great North African bishop, prayed a similar prayer , *"our hearts are restless, Lord, until they find their rest in You.***

**The Apostle Paul, struggled with the leadership of the Church in Corinth, the largest city of first century Greece. It was about seven times larger than Vacaville and was the hub of Greek industry. Like any large commercial city, Corinth was a center for open and unbridled immorality , reflected in its behavior, as well as its language and thought patterns. Unfortunately the young but large Christian church there, which Paul had organized, attracted some leaders who questioned Paul's authenticity and slandered him in his absence. What they were saying was that "Paul is bold at a distance, when he writes to us, but weak and indecisive when he is here face to face." People began to question. Their thought life tended to lean toward and reflect the pagan culture in which they lived. And with this situation in mind, Paul brings up the subject of a Christian's thought life, and the need to let Christ be Lord of the "thoughts of our hearts."**

**I believe that we are in the same danger today of having our thought life strongly influenced by a society that has moved away from Christian values. The struggle is not new. The Word of God reminds us, "Even before a word is on my tongue, O Lord, You know it completely." The psalmist, in Psalm 139 prays, "Search me, O God, and know my heart; test me and know my thoughts. See if there is any offense in me, and lead me in the way everlasting." Furthermore, the writer to the Hebrews points out that "the Word of God is living and active, and judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart."**

**How many of you here this morning remember that sermon I preached to you last Sunday? Jesus was at the home of Simon the Pharisee. Jesus knew what was in Simon's mind, and confronted him about it. Have you ever wondered just what the Lord thinks about your thought life? What about our thoughts as we gather with companions? How do we handle the "off-color" jokes, or the gender jokes that often crop up when the men gather at social events? Have you ever asked yourself the question, "What is the appropriate Christian response to a joke?" that would be out of bounds to Christ our Lord? Whether to laugh? even though to do so, as a Christian, would be inappropriate?**

**I don't mean to suggest that Christians should be dour, frowning, lacking in good humor. What I am suggesting is that we seek to make Jesus Christ Lord of that part of who we are --of our self-expression in thought and word. The Apostle Paul's charge is that we "take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ."**

**Years ago there was an Alec Guinness movie called "Captain's Paradise." The captain of the boat regularly plied the Mediterranean sea between a port in Spain and one in Morocco. When he was in Spanish waters a photo of his dear wife hung on the stateroom bulkhead. Halfway across, he would be alerted as his ship passed into the waters of North Africa, and he would simply flip the framed photo to the other side, displaying the image of his Moroccan mistress. He -was living two lives, easily, until he got into trouble. Rent the movie to discover his problem.**

**Don't underestimate the corrosive power of our culture. We are surrounded by filth--by the entertainment industry, the television media, magazine ads, the tabloids that choke the exits of our grocery stores, and yes, even as we check our emails on the Internet! We need to take inventory, lest the world's way of thinking take the place of Jesus in our lives. Perhaps it is time for some spiritual house-cleaning for some of us here this morning.**

**Edward Rutherfurd, author of those two great historic novels "Sarum" and "London," has written a third, entitled "The Forest." In it he describes Brother Adam, a member of a Cistertian monastery on the south coast of England. Adam points out, "Each day I measure my life by what I have thought, about God, or my fellow men, or the world around me."**

**Some of us have "weekday thoughts" and "Sunday thoughts." And sometimes they get crossed. About forty years ago I heard of a minister who, having spent a lot of time crafting his sermon, and upon delivering it, built up to a high point in his preaching, followed by dramatic silence. In that very moment everyone heard those words, "I always fry mine in lard."**

**Friends, be aware of your thoughts. Make Christ Lord of your thought life. Take captive every thought, and make it obedient to Christ. In conclusion, I would suggest that each of us begin our day with a prayer often said by clergy prior to delivering the sermon: "May the words of my mouth, and the meditations of my heart, be acceptable in Your sight, O Lord, my Strength, and my Redeemer ." Amen.**

BACK TO MAIN SERMON PAGE

Copyright © 2000 Community Presbyterian Church, Vacaville, All rights reserved.

Castles INFORMATION NETWORK